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MEMORANDUM

TO: Friends and Colleagues

FROM: Marilyn Littlejohn, Director
Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Division
Human Services Department

SUBJECT: Issue Brief:
Domestic Violence and Homelessness in King County

DATE: April 24, 2006

During my two-year tenure as director for the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention (DVSAP) Division, I have heard many questions about the relationship of domestic violence to homelessness. All who work with those victimized by domestic violence know that the connection is strong. I realized that as a community we need more opportunities and resources that foster discussion about the relationship between these two social problems.

One new effort to foster such discussion involves the City of Seattle's Domestic Violence Prevention Council. Recently, it formed a Housing Committee consisting of regional representatives with expertise in housing and/or domestic violence services and funders. This body, aligning its work with the County's 10-year plan to end homelessness, will develop and advocate strategies that help to end homelessness among domestic violence survivors.

In addition to the Housing Committee, my office has produced an issue brief on Domestic Violence and Homelessness in King County. Written by Linda Olsen, a senior planner at DVSAP and former director of the Eastside Domestic Violence Program, the brief not only addresses the intersection between domestic violence, homelessness and poverty, it also discusses the division between domestic violence services and homeless services nationally and locally. The document ends with recommendations for how the domestic violence and homeless systems can coordinate efforts to keep survivors of domestic violence safe and housed.

Attached is copy of the issue brief for your review. The goal of the brief's distribution is to promote further discussion and to inspire action from our community toward the goal of ending homelessness for victims/survivors of domestic violence and their children.

For more information, feel free to contact Linda Olsen at Linda.Olsen@seattle.gov